

TOWN OF NAPLES
Board of Selectpersons Special Meeting
Monday, March 31, 2008
Minutes

In attendance: Christine Powers, Robert Caron Sr, Dana Watson, Karen Thompson, Rick Paraschak, Derik Goodine,

PUBLIC MEETING

Maine MDOT Bridge discussion – Bruce Vando, Deputy Commissioner of Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) was present, as well as two of his associates. Two options for the bridge were outlined. The first option is for a complete replacement of the span bridge. The second option is for a fixed bridge in replacement of the span bridge. From a ground transportation perspective, a fixed bridge option has obvious, overwhelming advantages in no delays during the busy summer times and the possible economic improvements that have been suggested for the Naples Causeway area to attempt to decrease the possible detrimental regional economic impact that was suggested would be a consequence of this choice. MDOT is unsure what factors make the Naples Causeway a “destination”, whether it’s the span bridge or the view of Mt Washington. Most water vessels would be able to pass underneath a proposed 14’ clearance of a fixed bridge option, with known exceptions of the Songo River Queen, and sailboats. Estimated costs were discussed, with no finalized figures being brought forward. MDOT would like to have input from Naples about what possible Causeway improvements it would like to see, should a fixed bridge be the option chosen. Mr. Caron and Mrs. Powers asked how much input Naples *really* has in the ultimate decision of the MDOT on the options for this bridge, since it seems that MDOT is here to try and gather information on possible Causeway improvements instead of discussing both options. Mr. Vando stated that what is needed is a more comprehensive view of what the options could really be. MDOT is aware of more exact costs and parameters associated with replacing the span bridge, but it does not know what would be involved in possible Causeway improvements. In order to present two viable options to the Town of Naples, MDOT needs more information, which is why they are inquiring during this public discussion before the Selectboard. Mr. Caron stated that as a taxpayer, he personally feels the State of Maine should replace the span bridge and bear the full cost without any additional funds from Naples, but that all the taxpayers should make the final decision on it. Mrs. Powers mentioned that when talking to townspeople informally, she has heard a favorable opinion for a fixed bridge as often as for a span bridge, so she is unsure of what the real public opinion is and would like to reserve her opinion until such is determined. Mr. Paraschak voiced questions on the placement and plans for the temporary bridge which would be needed for either option. Mr. Goodine feels that Naples deserves to have the bridge replaced by MDOT with the same “character” as the current bridge; not a concrete bridge that doesn’t fit the atmosphere of the Causeway. He is hesitant to go to a referendum with a choice of “fixed span” vs “opening span” when the fixed span package is unknown. Mr. Vando reiterated that putting together a fixed span package to present to Naples as a viable option is his purpose at this meeting. Mr. Paraschak suggested that an

opinion poll should be taken during elections done in May to ascertain the opinion of the residents and give the Selectboard an idea of how to proceed on their behalf. Mr. Goodine agreed to have a Warrant article for this opinion poll ready to present to the Selectboard for approval at their next meeting.

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Mrs. Powers called the Board of Selectpersons special meeting to order at 8:25 PM.

OLD BUSINESS

Warrant Articles for Referendum – The first two articles presented by Mr. Goodine for revision are as follows: Article 1 - Do you support the MDOT replacement of the Naples drawbridge with another drawbridge?; and Article 2 - Do you support the alternative plan of the MDOT to remove the drawbridge in Naples and replace it with a fixed bridge? Mr. Caron suggested that as much supporting information as is available should be given with each article. Mrs. Powers agreed that a more elaborate draft should be done for presentation of this referendum, with possible input of the Town Attorney. Mr. Caron suggested that the articles should include the possible estimated costs as stated by MDOT. Mr. Paraschak added that the optional Causeway improvements proposed by MDOT for the fixed bridge option should be listed as well: ornamental lighting, seawall stabilization, parking improvements, decorative widening, fencing, etc. Mr. Goodine is concerned with the mentioning of specific costs and/or agreements with MDOT about these options when they are not in writing, since MDOT has not fulfilled their verbal agreements in the past. Mr. Watson wants the potential cost to the Town of Naples mentioned in the articles. Article 1 was revised as follows: Do you support the state of Maine replacing the swing bridge in Naples, Maine with another swing bridge, with any amount exceeding 10 (or 11) million dollars coming from the Town, Lake Region Communities and/or local businesses? Article 2 was revised as follows: Do you support the alternative plan of the MDOT to remove the swing bridge in Naples and replace it with a fixed span, non-opening decorative bridge for MDOT 8 million dollars to include enlargement of the Causeway from Point A to Sandy's Flight Deck with decorative lighting, fencing, seawall stabilization, etc. The wording of Articles 1 and 2 will be reviewed by Mr. Goodine after his upcoming conversation with MDOT to verify the facts presented in the Articles, and will be presented for approval at the next regularly scheduled Selectboard Meeting. Mr. Goodine presented Article 3 for revision as follows: Do you support transportation/bus service between Naples and Portland if it was offered in the Town of Naples? Mr. Paraschak suggested that the cost per ride should be included somewhere as well as the fact that Naples would be providing a subsidy from tax dollars in order to have this service provided. Mr. Goodine stated that he would add a note, detailing that information.

NEW BUSINESS

Correspondence – Mrs. Powers had drafted a letter to the State of Maine, detailing the Town of Naples' frustration and extreme dissatisfaction with the calculation of

Educational State Educational Subsidy by town and the way that it has affected Naples negatively for many years. Mrs. Powers will revise the drafted letter and bring it back for review to the Selectboard.

PAYROLL AND PAYABLES WERE SIGNED.

Mr. Watson made a motion to adjourn at 9:09 pm; seconded by Mrs. Thompson. All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cathy Markavich